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### The Sunday and the Sabbath in the Light of the Bible

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**The Sunday and the Sabbath in the  
Light of the Bible**

**A Thesis**

**presented to the faculty of**

**Concordia Seminary**

**St. Louis, Mo.**

**By**

**Oscar H. Marten**

**in partial fulfillment of the**

**requirements for the degree**

**of**

**Baccalaureus Divinitatis.**

*Read & Approved by  
Geo. Lutz  
O. C. A. Boeck*



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three camps. We have first of all those who say that the O.T.  
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Even as the other doctrines of the Holy Scriptures have not been left untouched by man, so also the doctrine of the Sabbath, and with it the doctrine of the Sunday have been the subject of almost endless controversy. Those that have discussed the Sabbath and Sunday Question are divided into three camps. We have first of all those who say that the O.T. Sabbath is a part of the Moral Law and, therefore, maintain that the Saturday is to be observed also in the New Testament times. (Seventh Day Adventists; Seventh Day Baptists: The Christian Israelites.) Then, there are those who say that God indeed abolished the O.T. Sabbath, but instituted in its <sup>place</sup> the Sunday. (Ref.Sects), and some modern Lutherans with <sup>Reformed</sup> tendencies. And the last class is made up of those who stand on Scriptural ground and contend, that there exists no <sup>relation</sup> at all between the Sunday and the Sabbath, because the former is purely a product of Christian liberty, while the latter is expressly commanded of God, and that consequently all days are alike in the N.T. In this thesis it is our aim to find out what the Bible teaches us, concerning the Sabbath and the Sunday. In the first part we shall consider the Sabbath as to its origin and history; its significance; its abrogation.

<sup>observance</sup> Many critics of the present day find the origin of the Sabbath not in the Bible, but derive it from the ancient customs prevalent among the nations. In due time, they say, it was also observed by the Hebrews, and definite instructions as regards its observance were given them as recorded in Exodus 20. Our thesis, however, omits these contentions <sup>entirely</sup> and confines itself to the Sabbath in the light of the Bible.

<sup>their dwell</sup> The first mention of the Jewish Sabbath is made in Ex.26,5;22-30, in connection with the gathering of manna in the <sup>the</sup>



desert. On the sixth day, the children of Israel were to gather twice as much as on other days, which fact Moses explained: "Tomorrow is the rest of the Holy Sabbath unto the Lord. Enough will remain for the second day, and it will not spoil; but whosoever, goes out on the seventh day will find none." Beyond a doubt, this experience was to prepare them for the institution of the Sabbath on Mount Sinai, recorded Ex.20,8-11., and again repeated in Deut.5,12-15. These <sup>instruct-</sup> instructions are supplemented in Ex.23,12-17; 34,21; 35,1-3; Lev.23,3. Summing up the contents of these passages we have the following: <sup>ing:</sup> The commandment is introduced with the words: Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy. The significance of the word, "Remember" is not found in this that the people were to recall the Sabbath as existing in former days, but the connotation simply brings out the fact that they were to "note well", or, as the German has it, "merke wohl"! The week is then divided into two periods, one of six days, in which the people were <sup>to</sup> to perform the various works necessary to their subsistence, <sup>and</sup> and the seventh Day, which was to be a day of rest, on which they were to abstain from all labor. This rest from all labor is one of the chief purposes of the Sabbath. And not only the Israelite and his immediate family were to be benefited by this <sup>this</sup> observance, but their servants and cattle as well. While the Law as such does not stipulate the various works which were <sup>per-</sup> permitted and which were forbidden, we find a number of them, however, in the historical books and the prophetic writings. Thus the work in the field is forbidden in Ex.34,21. A man <sup>who</sup> who had picked up wood on the Sabbath is stoned to death at the command of God, Numb.15,32. They were to kindle no fires in their dwellings, and no food was to be prepared, Ex.35,3; 16,23; <sup>23;</sup> further stipulations will be brought up to mention in a later



paragraph.

In conjunction with the command of abstinence from labor on that day we have the injunction of divine worship. The daily sacrifices were to be doubled, so that two lambs were offered in the morning and two in the evening, and the <sup>show</sup> breads were replaced with fresh loaves. While the Children of Israel were on their journey in the wilderness, they assembled <sup>-ed</sup> for worship before the tabernacle as the dwelling place of God, but when they later on occupied the promised land, this coming together at this tabernacle was of necessity observed in a lesser degree. Yet the Sabbath of the Lord was to be celebrated in the individual homes, and no doubt, the <sup>worship-</sup>ing of Jehovah in the godly homes, was combined with the abstinence from labor.

The HISTORY of the Sabbath has for its center not the developing of the Sabbath in the course of time into something <sup>-719</sup> which it was not in the beginning, but rather the extent to which it was observed by the Jews in the following centuries. That the Sabbath was either improperly observed, or sometimes altogether ignored in the time of the prophets, seems evident from their writings. Amos chides those that are impatient <sup>for</sup> for the passing of the Sabbath, because it interferes with their <sup>u-</sup>surious business, 8,5; Isaiah is equally emphatic in condemning his contemporaries for their unworthy celebrations, Is.1; again, Isaiah conditions Israel's triumph on the observance of the Sabbath, which may not be set aside to pursue secular business, 56,255; Ezekiel describes the laxness of the fathers for the purpose of impressing upon his hearers the importance of the observance of the Sabbath, evidently neglected in his day, 20,12,20.21.24; Nehemiah took the people to task for profaning the Sabbath, and to prevent them from turning it into



market day, he ordered the gates closed and kept closed until the end of the Sabbath, 13,19.

In the Maccabean age the observance of the Sabbath <sup>was</sup> especially strict. And just because the Jews were distinguished <sup>-quished</sup> by the Sabbath as a sign of the Covenant with Jehovah, the heathen were bent upon exterminating the day. During the time <sup>of</sup> of these strifes the question was raised, whether it was lawful <sup>to</sup> to bear arms on the Sabbath. On <sup>one</sup> one occasion about a thousand <sup>men</sup> men women, and children were slain by their enemies, because they considered it sinful to defend themselves on the Sabbath. <sup>When</sup> When their leaders were informed of that event they saw that a con- <sup>con-</sup>tinued adherence to that principle would finally lead to the destruction of the people, and therefore, mitigated it at <sup>least</sup> least to such an extent, that the Jews were permitted to defend <sup>them-</sup> themselves if they were attacked. And so throughout this period of time the Sabbath seems to have been observed with ever <sup>in-</sup>creasing rigor, though this gradually deteriorated into mere externalism. This was especially the case at the time <sup>of</sup> of the Pharisees and their contemporaries, who went so far as to charge <sup>charge</sup> Jesus with having broken the Sabbath Law, because he healed the sick and did other works of charity, which were never <sup>-did</sup> forbidden by the Law. To this day orthodox Jews observe the O.T. Sabbath <sup>Sabbath</sup> law, while liberal Jews have renounced it.

What, then, could be the significance of the Sabbath? Why did God institute it? It was first of all to serve as a line of demarcation between the Children of the Covenant <sup>and</sup> and the heathen. (Ex.31,13; Ezek.20.12.20.) " I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, that they might know <sup>know</sup> that I am the Lord that doth sanctify them. And hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye <sup>ye</sup> may know that I am the Lord Your God." The many ceremonies we <sup>we</sup>



find regarding the Sabbath, required much learning and application to master them. Therefore a heathen would find it very difficult to gain admittance to the Jewish celebrations.

At the same time the Sabbath was to bring to the Israelite's remembrance the deliverance from the bondage in Egypt, wherefore the Lord says: "And remember that thou was a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath Day." (Deut. 5, 15) The necessity of such an admonition we see from the fact, that soon after their deliverance from Egypt they yearned again for the flesh-pots of former days. They had forgotten how the Egyptians had enslaved them; how they had cried unto the Lord in their anguish, and how He had so wonderfully answered their prayers.

A still further purpose of the Sabbath (among the ordinances of the Ceremonial Law) is given us by the Apostle Paul in Gal. 4, 1-3. And Peter speaks similarly in Acts 15, 10: "Now, therefore, Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" In these passages the Ceremonial Law of which the Sabbath was an integral part, is compared to a guardianship, a yoke, under which the Children of Israel were held according to the will of God. Though they did not always recognize the value of all these observances, they were, nevertheless, required to meet all the obligations. This must have constituted a rather heavy load for the devout Israelites; for from morning until evening, from the time of his youth until the time of old age he was surrounded by various ordinances leaving practically nothing to his own decision. The purpose of this was to teach the Israelite implicit obedience, and at the same time to burden him with



a yoke, as it were, that he might yearn for the deliverer, <sup>the</sup> the Messiah, and diligently pray: "Oh, that salvation out of <sup>from</sup> Zion <sup>-ed</sup> were come!" Ps. 114, 53. This wish and prayer would be fulfilled in time, and the very Sabbath Law was to be for them a token of its fulfillment. For the Sabbath Law with its rest was to be a symbol of that true rest which the N.T. should bring to <sup>all</sup> all believers, a spiritual rest in Christ culminating in the <sup>-al</sup> eternal rest above. <sup>-tion</sup> To this rest the Sabbath Law directed the attention of the believing Jew by connecting it with God's rest on the seventh day.

Again, the Lord speaks of the Sabbath Ex. 31, 7: "It is a sign between me and the Children of Israel forever: for <sup>in</sup> in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed." On this day, then, man was <sup>to</sup> to bear in mind that the world and all it contains did not <sup>evolve</sup> evolve out of a vague nothing, but that it is the handiwork of an almighty God, who formed it and sustains it; he was to remember that Jehovah created the world and that Jehovah would be the <sup>one</sup> one before whom he must give an account of himself when the <sup>day</sup> day of justice comes. The reference to the rest of God is treated <sup>more</sup> more fully below.

Furthermore, the people on that day (Sabbath) were to rest from all their labors. The day was to give those who had <sup>to</sup> to work hard all week an opportunity to enjoy some much needed <sup>rest</sup> rest. But in this connection a far nobler purpose must not be overlooked. The ceasing from labor was to provide time and opportunity for the people to come together and in a joint service to offer up sacrifice, and to worship the Lord in prayer and thanksgiving.

Yet it seems that by far the most important and outstanding purpose of the Sabbath consisted in this that it pointed to the eternal Sabbath, of which the forgiveness of sin <sup>and</sup> and



the consciousness that before God we are justified through the blood of Christ, which we have here on earth, is a fore-taste. Particularly the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews sheds light on the rest of the eternal Sabbath. God forsook his rest, so to say, at the beginning of the creation and during the following six days formed the heavens and the earth, and then entered upon his rest again. Likewise the people of God here on earth is to enter upon the eternal rest, when their life's work has been accomplished. Here the <sup>-The</sup> Apostle speaks of the REST of God and adds the admonition: "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." He explains it with the following words: "Although the works <sup>were</sup> finished from the foundation of the world, For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did <sup>rest</sup> the seventh day from all his works." Then he proceeds to show how God on account of the obstinacy of the Children of Israel in the wilderness swore that they were not to enter into his rest; that their children since then had entered into the <sup>Land</sup> of Canaan, and that many days hence God had again spoken <sup>through</sup> David: "Today, if ye hear His voice, harden not your hearts." He meant to tell them that the hardening of the hearts of their <sup>-their</sup> fathers in the wilderness excluded them from the rest of God, but that they, if they believed, might still enter it. But at the same time this rest in the Land of Canaan was not the <sup>final</sup> rest, for that was still awaiting them. What it is, the <sup>Apostle</sup> tells us in V.19: "For he that is entered into his rest, he also <sup>also</sup> hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." This rest <sup>rest</sup> is contrasted to works. Even God worked when he created the universe, so the believers do works while here on earth; but good as they are, they cannot compare with the rest which



follows in the next life. "Let us labor, therefore, to enter into the rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." This rest from works begins when the Believers <sup>have</sup> finished their course upon earth, when they enter eternal <sup>bliss</sup> bliss and happiness. There, in heaven, they will have no trials <sup>and</sup> and temptations, no afflictions, no tribulations, no fears, and <sup>no</sup> no anguish. God wipes away their tears. Their rest is perfect with God, and there they shall praise Him forevermore. That <sup>is</sup> is the Sabbath according to its typical significance.

When Christ had come all was fulfilled, and the Sabbath <sup>Sabbath</sup> also had served its purpose. After He had completed His <sup>work</sup> work, the Sabbath was abrogated, and so we turn to consider its abrogation.

When the Lord chose the Children of Israel as his people, he made a Covenant with them. He imposed many and heavy laws upon them, and that they might continually yearn for the appearance of the Messiah who was to come out of their <sup>midst</sup> midst and deliver them. The people of the Old Covenant were, as Paul says, Gal.3,23:4,24: "Shut up and kept under the laws;" were "in bondage under the elements of the world"; were <sup>under</sup> "under tutors and governors until the appointed time of the Father"

According to the last words of the Apostle the Old Covenant with its various ordinances was to terminate with <sup>the</sup> the advent of Christ. The Old is the New Covenant what <sup>the shadow</sup> the shadow is to the body, as Paul writes: "Which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ," (Col.2,17. and again in Hebrews 10,1: "The Law has the shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things." With the New Covenant then, the Old has ceased to exist, the most powerful proof of which is the rending of the veil in the temple at the time of the crucifixion of Christ. And in Gal.5,1 Paul says: <sup>Stand</sup> "Stand



fast therefore, in the liberty where with Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." This much, then is clear, that in the New Covenant we are no longer bound by the Cerimonial Law; they now belong into the sphere of adiaphora. If the Sabbath was a part of this <sup>law</sup>, its abrogation cannot be denied. That shall be our contention in the following paragraphs.

The Sabbath Law was given only to the Jews. This <sup>fact</sup> is substantiated by the following Scripture passages: Ex. <sup>12-</sup>31, 12-17: "Speak thou unto the CHILDREN OF ISRAEL." Moses is to <sup>deal</sup> with the Children of Israel. To them he is to say: "Ye shall keep the Sabbath." Why? "It is a sign between me and you <sup>through-</sup>out your generations, that he may know that I am the Lord <sup>that</sup> doth sanctify you", Ex. 31, 13. Again, note Deut, 5, 2ff: "The Lord our God made a Covenan t with us at Horeb. The Lord <sup>made</sup> not this Covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who <sup>are</sup> all of us here, alive this day." Which is that Covenant? Verses 6-21 supply the answer. It is the Decalogue, as it <sup>was</sup> given in Ex. 20. Also note verse 15: "And remember that thou wast a servant in the Land of Egypt and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and an out-stretched arm." Cf. also Ezek. 20, 10-13, and Jer. 17, 20-22.

Still further evidence that the Sabbath was given to the Jews only, and not to all mankind, we find in the <sup>fact</sup>, that no-where in the Bible does God say that the heathen are an abomination unto Him because they do not observe the Sabbath given in Ex. 20, as he does for instance in Lev. 18, 24, 25, <sup>where</sup> he threatens to punish the heathen on account of their fornication and adultery. Nor can any one prove that this commandment must be observed to comply with the law of Love to God and our fellow-man. Nor is it anywhere in the New Testament as we find <sup>our</sup> <sup>find</sup>



all the others recorded almost verbatim: 1. Matth. 4, 10<sup>Cor.</sup>; 1, Cor. 10, 14; 2. Mt. 5, 34; 4. Eph. 6, 1-3; 5. Mt. 5, 21-26; 6. Mt. 5, 27-32; 7. I Cor. 6, 9; 8. Rom. 1, 30. 32; Jas. 4, 11; 9 & 10. Rom. 7, 7; 13, 9. In vain do we look for the third, insofar as the Sabbath celebration is concerned. Nor do we find this commandment written in the hearts of the heathen, so that they observe <sup>the</sup> the seventh day. They know nothing of the sanctification of the seventh day. *the law of Love, even as Christ says: "A new com-*

That were sufficient to establish beyond a doubt the abrogation of the Sabbath, yet we wish to add the passages of the Old and New Testament, which clearly state that the Sabbath Law was to be binding only for O.T. times. In Jeremiah 31, 31<sup>ff</sup> we read: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel <sup>and</sup> and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant <sup>that</sup> that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." It is quite evident that here the Lord is speaking of two covenants; of an Old one, whose time is limited and which is to give place to a New one which is to be entirely different in its essence. In order to avoid a misunderstanding, he immediately adds to which <sup>which</sup> covenant he is referring, namely, the one which he made <sup>with</sup> with them, when he led them out of Egypt. <sup>and</sup> Which this Covenant is and where it was made is indicated in Deut. 5, 2. 5; that it refers to the whole Ceremonial Law is shown us by Acts 15, 10: "Now therefore, Brethren, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers, nor we were able to bear?" He means to say that a forced service is an abomination unto the Lord, wherefore at his time he will establish a new covenant, Hebr. 8, 13: "In that he saith, a new covenant he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is



ready to vanish away". The new covenant to displace the old one <sup>one</sup> is given Jer.31,33: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." They will serve him joyfully and gladly, for "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." To whom much is given, loves much. That, then, is the difference between the two covenants. In <sup>the</sup> Old everything was to be governed by Law, but in the New all is <sup>is</sup> to flow from the law of Love, even as Christ says: "A new <sup>Command-</sup> commandment I give unto you: that ye love one another." <sup>violator</sup>

We turn to the New Testament to see what Christ contends <sup>-Under</sup> regarding the Sabbath. <sup>mitigated the Sabbath Law.</sup>

Walther says: "Allerdings, hat Christus, der Herr, nach dem Zeugnis des Neuen Testaments den Sabbath streng gehalten <sup>nur</sup> und nur die pharis-aeischen Verkehrungen des Sabbathgebotes gestraft; aber ersteres nicht, um seinen Glauebigen das Joch voranzutragen <sup>tragen,</sup> sondern um ihnen dasselbe abzunehmen. Denn er war unter das Gesetz getan, auf dass er die, so unter dem Gesetze, Gal.4,4,5. <sup>erloesete</sup> So lange das Himmelreich nur nahe herbeigekommen war, war <sup>auch</sup> auch das Zeremonialgesetz des Alten Bundes noch in Kraft; als aber nach Christi Tod der Vorhang im Tempel zerrissen und Christus siegreich von den Toten auferstanden war, als er den Geist ueber seine Apostel ausgegossen hatte, und nun die Predigt derselben vom Reiche Gottes (Apost.28,31) in aller Welt <sup>erscholl.</sup> erscholl da hiess es nun: 'So lasset nun niemand euch Gewissen machen, ueber Speise, oder ueber Trank, oder ueber bestimmte Feiertage, oder Neumonden, oder SABBATHER; welches ist der Schatten von dem <sup>dem</sup> das zukuenftig war, aber der Koerper selbst ist in Christo,' Col.2,16.17. Ja. nun hiess es: 'Ihr haltet Tage-----; ich fuerchte, dass ich nicht vielleicht umsonst habe an euch gearbeitet!' Gal.4,10.11. Und allerdings hat nicht nur Christus, <sup>-iger</sup> der Herr, nur den uebergesetzlichen, heuchlerischen, werkheilige



Rigorismus der Pharisäer gestraft, sondern selbst die heiligen<sup>-gen</sup> Apostel haben nach Christi Auferstehung erst nach und nach<sup>der</sup> der vollen Freiheit des Neuen Bundes sich gebraucht und dieselbe<sup>zu</sup> zu gebrauchen gelehrt; allein dies geschah, wie Augustinus sich ausdrückt: Ut synagoga cum honore sepeliretur, das ist, damit die Synagoge oder die juedische Kirche mit Ehren begraben<sup>werde.</sup> werde. (Ep. 82. ad Hieron.) Derselbe Augustinus sagt aber in demselben Briefe auch, wer NUN das Gewissen an die Dinge des Zeremonialgesetzes binde, der sei ein 'impus sepultrae violator', das ist<sup>ist</sup> ein gottloser Leichenschaender."

Yet also Christ mitigated the Sabbath Law.

After the Lord had healed the man who had been sick for thirty eight years, he told him to take up his bed and go home. He<sup>could</sup> could very well have told the man to wait until evening, and then take<sup>take</sup> his bed and go home. But he did not do that. As Lord of the Sabbath he had the right to command even an unnecessary work. Again, despite the fact, that he knew some would be offended at the act, he permitted his disciples to pluck ears of grain, which according to the Pharisees was breaking the Sabbath. When<sup>when</sup> they approached him on that point, he called their attention to the example of David, who driven thereto by his great need, ate<sup>ate</sup> the showbread in the temple, although it was provided for the priests only. This breaking of the Sabbath he puts on the same<sup>same</sup> plane with the transgressing of the Ceremonial Law, to indicate that although not as yet abrogated, it was nevertheless nearing the end of its existence. His entire defence culminates in the words: "The Son of Man is Lord also over the Sabbath." He<sup>means</sup> means to say: "I may do with the Sabbath as I please; even as I have given it, so may I also abrogate it." All other attempts<sup>find</sup> to find a different meaning in these words are<sup>made</sup> done in the interest of bolstering up preconceived notions regardless of the plain words of the text and their context.



13.

The Apostles likewise, take a stand just as decisive and show by word and deed that the Christian of the N.T. is no longer bound to these Sabbath observances of the Ceremonial Law.

Paul writes Gal.4,9-11: "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days and months, and times and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain." The Apostle is here not speaking of certain reckonings of time among the heathen, but of the days, months, which Moses, by command of God had given the Jews. These the false teachers had imposed upon the Galatians as necessary to salvation. Very much disgusted with the run of affairs, he tells the Galatians that these observances are but "weak and beggarly elements." Note the contempt contained in those words. Woe unto the man who should have expressed such an opinion in the Old Testament! He proceeds "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed labor upon you in vain." He expresses fear as regards their salvation. Against this the opponents urge, that Paul wrote this in his zeal to exclude all possible chances of workrighteousness and to impress upon the Galatians that they should solely rely on the merit of Christ. BUT, taken for granted that it was thus, would not he have directly mentioned justification? And again, would an Apostle of God rebuke the keeping of the Sabbath, if it were expressly commanded of God? That Paul plainly taught the abrogation of the Sabbath is also evident from the following passage: "Let no man therefore, judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ. Col.2,16,17."

Here Paul means to say that the differences and distinctions as regards food and drink no longer existed. On the



same level he places the observances of an Holy Day, <sup>Mosco,</sup> New Moons, and the Sabbath, concerning which the Jews were likewise threatened with death, should they transgress these commandments in O.T. times. Even as they were no longer bound by the O.T. ordinances regarding meat and drink, so they were likewise free from the observances of the various days. They were only the shadow of that which was to come, and now since Christ, <sup>who</sup> who is the body, has come, they are of no avail.

The apponents seek to circumvent this clear passage by distinguishing between the Ceremonial Sabbath and the Sabbath of Jehovah, said to have been instituted at the time of the creation and hence binding upon all men. Paul, so they <sup>say</sup> say, calls the Sabbath a shadow and therefore he cannot mean the Sabbath of Jehovah, but the Ceremonial Sabbath, for the former existed before the Ceremonial Law and was included in the Decalogue. But just that which they are to prove, they accept as already proven. And further-more, who gives them the right to make this distinction. Nowhere in the Scripture can it be found. And if God did not speak of the Ceremonial Sabbath on Sinai, where does he speak of it?

Again, it is urged, that God says through Moses; "It is a sign between me and the children forever" But, we dare not forget that the Lord always says: "Between me and the Children of Israel". That the Hebrews "holam" signifies not only eternity but also merely a long period of time is clear from the following passages: In Gen.17,8 God speaks to Abraham: "I will give unto thee, and to thy seed, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an EVERLASTING possession." If the literal sense would be pressed, God would be guilty of falsehood, for the Children of Israel do not own the land of Canaan for the last eighteen hundred years. Concerning the Feast of



the Passover God says, "And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons forever". But did not Christ institute the Sacrament of the Altar in its place? Again, <sup>the</sup> of the servant who preferred to remain with his master, we read <sup>15,</sup> Deut. 15: 17: "He shall be thy servant forever." And yet the master <sup>to</sup> had to set this servant free in the fiftieth, the Jubilee year.

<sup>are told</sup> The opponents raise a further objection. <sup>Go thy way</sup> They say: Does not Paul repeatedly go into the Synagogue to teach, and thus observes the custom of the Jews? Paul himself gives us the answer, L. Cor. 9. 19-22, where we are told that he conformed to their customs and traditions as long as he could do so without violating his conscience. He did this that he might first bring them to the knowledge of Christ, and once converted, he would then proceed to instruct them concerning their Christian liberty, for had he immediately insisted upon his rights, we can easily imagine what success he would have had among those with whom the Ceremonial Law had become <sup>flesh</sup> flesh and blood. A typical example of this is the circumcision of Timothy, which Paul did and Timothy agreed to, that they <sup>might</sup> might gain entrance the easier. But when later on the Jews demanded that also Titus be circumcised, Paul flatly refused. Why? He tells us in Gal. 2, 4, 5.: "Because of false brethren <sup>unawares</sup> unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into <sup>bondage</sup> bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, <sup>that</sup> that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you." 2. 7

Furthermore the opponents urge Matth. 5, 17: <sup>subiges</sup> "I am not come to destroy the Law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. "Therefore they say, since <sup>the</sup> the Sabbath is a part of the Law, Christ did not abrogate it. And according to their explanation "fulfill" here does not mean <sup>to</sup> to



bring to an end, but "reestablish". But, how then, can they explain the "fulfilling" in Luke 24,44: "All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me (Christ)?"

Indeed Christ came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it, both the Ceremonial and the Moral, the former as we are told in Matth. 8,4: (to the cleansed leper) "Go thy way and show thyself unto the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." etc., the latter, as Paul says Gal. 4,4.5: "Made under the Law, that he might redeem those that were under the law." From the above we see that we are no longer bound to observe the O.T. Sabbath, and that the Seventh Day Adventists and those who hold the same views, accuse us in vain of removing a part of the Moral Law.

There are, however, such who, although they concede that the Sabbath was abrogated, insist, nevertheless, that Sunday was instituted in the place of the Sabbath, and on this question we shall become clear by considering Sunday as to its origin and history; significance; and its relation to the Sabbath. This, they say is the contention of Luther and his

coworker. That these people (the Reformed et al.) actually believe that the Sunday has taken the place of the Sabbath by divine ordinance, we see from their confessions.

The Roman Church says in "Catechismus Romanum": "On account of which reasons the Apostles have appointed the first day of the seven to be dedicated to worship", III,4Q.7

The Greek Catholic Church in its "Rechtgläubiges Bekenntnis" says: "We are to know, that God hath appointed a day." Cat. qu. 60. And again: "On account of this (the third commandment) we are constrained to observe the other days which the Church appointed." Cat. qu. 60.



The Presbyterians say: "In His word, through a positive and everlasting command, which is binding upon all men at all times, God appointed one day of the seven for a Sabbath, which was from the beginning of the world unto the resurrection of Christ. Since the resurrection of Christ it was transferred to the first day of the week, which in the Scriptures is called the "Lord's Day", and which is to be observed as the Lord's Day until the end of the world".

The Methodists say in their Catechism: "What is the meaning of the fourth commandment? The fourth commandment <sup>deals</sup> deals with the right use of the time; it commands us to sanctify <sup>one</sup> one day of each week, while on the other six we are to work diligently." No. 3, P. 67

And in the "Lutheran World", the official organ of the General Synod, we find words to the effect, that the Jewish Sabbath and its ceremonies as they are presented in the levitical economy, have been abrogated even as the rest of the ceremonial ordinances, but that the original, the generic Sabbath of Creation and of the Ten Commandments was at no time <sup>time</sup> put aside. This, they say is the contention of Luther and his <sup>his</sup> coworkers. (This claim is refuted by a later quotation from Luther.)

Over against these contentions we ask: What does Scripture say on this point? In Acts 2, 46 we read of the <sup>first</sup> first Christian Congregation that they came together every day. <sup>Since</sup> Since however, this arrangement could not last, it was quite natural <sup>-al</sup> that they should appoint a certain day on which they agreed to come together for worship and for the breaking of bread. The Jewish Christians retained the Sabbath for some time, while <sup>their</sup> the gentile Brethren observed the Sunday. The <sup>the</sup> first traces of the observance of the Sunday we find in Acts 20, 7: "And upon the



first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread....." Some also find an allusion to the Sunday in Rev.1,10, where we are told of the "Lord's day." but just which day is meant here cannot be definitely established.

Nevertheless, concerning the Sunday Justin Martyr writes: On that day which is called Sunday, all that reside in the cities and on the land come to one place, where the writings of the Apostles or the prophets are read as long as time permits, Justin Martyr's Apologie No.87.88. Thus we see that the Christians observed the Sunday, even when the Church was still in its infancy. Why did they do this? Was it <sup>because</sup> because God commanded it? We answer in the negative. In order to establish the contention that Sunday is divinely instituted, it will be necessary first to prove that the observance of a special day is enjoined in the Moral Law and in the second <sup>place,</sup> place to produce a Bible passage from the New Testament which clearly <sup>- by</sup> teaches that Sunday has taken the place of the Sabbath.

Summing up the Moral Law in the words of Christ, <sup>find</sup> we find that it is contained in six words: Love to God and one's neighbor. Everything that flows from this Love to God and our fellowmen belongs to the immutable and eternal Moral Law which the Creator wrote into the heart at the time of <sup>-tion,</sup> creation, and which the Holy Spirit again writes into the heart of the regenerate. Applying this rule, then, to the Sunday question, we find that the observance of a special day, or at least one day out of seven in the week, does not of necessity flow from Love to God and our neighbor. Indeed, the Love to God demands that we serve him, but not that this be done on any <sup>day,</sup> special day the love to our neighbor demands that he be given rest, but <sup>that</sup> that the relation of rest to work be in the ratio of six to one, <sup>is</sup> is outside of its pale. And again, we refer to Col.2 and Rom.14



which clearly teach that no day is holier than another day; that there is no special day commanded on which we are to worship God; and that the days mentioned in the Old Testament were meant only for that time.

And that is the position of our confessions:

"Of this kind is the observance of the Lord's day, Easter, Pentecost, and like holy-days and rites. For those who <sup>-judge</sup> judge that, by the authority of the Church the observance of the Lord's Day instead of the Sabbath-Day was ordained as a <sup>thing</sup> ~~thing~~ <sup>Sabbath-</sup> necessary, do greatly err, Scripture has abrogated the Sabbath-day; for it teaches that, since the Gospel has been revealed, all the ceremonies of Moses can be omitted. And yet, because it was necessary to appoint a certain day, that the people <sup>might</sup> might know when they ought to come together, it appears that the church designated the Lord's Day for this purpose; and this <sup>day</sup> day seems to have been chosen all the more for this additional <sup>reason</sup> reason that men might have an example of Christian Liberty, and might know that the keeping of neither of the Sabbath, nor any <sup>other</sup> other day is necessary. "Augsburg Conf. Art. 28. 91.

<sup>Gottes</sup> Luther says: "Darum steht's und soll's stehen, dass wir <sup>wir</sup> Oster halten, wenn wir wollen; und wenn wir auch den Freitag zum Sonntag machen, und wiederum, dennoch sollt es recht <sup>sein</sup> sein, sofern es geschehe durch die Majestaeten und die Christen, <sup>wil</sup> wie gesagt, eintraechtlich. Denn Moses ist tot und begraben <sup>durch</sup> durch Christum. Und Tag oder Zeit sollen nicht Herren sein ueber die <sup>die</sup> Christen, sondern die Christen sind freie Herren ueber Tage und Zeit zu setzen, wie sie wollen, oder es ihnen recht ist. Denn Christus <sup>hat</sup> hat alles frei gemacht, da er Moses aufgehoben hat <sup>weil</sup> ohn dass wir's wollen lassen bleiben, wie es jetzt gehet, <sup>oder</sup> weil da kein Fahr, Irrtum, Suende, noch Ketzerei ist, und ohne Not <sup>anderen</sup> aus eigener, einzelner Durft nicht aendern wollen, um der anderen



willen, die gleich mit uns an solch Ostern hängen. Denn ohn Ostern und Pfingsten wissen wir selig zu werden, und um der Ostern, Pfingsten, Sonntag und Freitag willen nicht koennen verdammt werden, wie Paulus lehrt". (Von Concilliis und Kirchen, 1539 Erl. Augs. 24. 275.)

If Sunday, then, is neither commanded in the Old Testament Decalogue, nor in the New Testament, why do the Christians nevertheless celebrate the day?

Luther says: "Aber einen christlichen Verstand zu fasses <sup>fuer</sup> fuer die Einfaeltigen, was Gott in diesem Gebot von uns fordert, so merke, dass wir Feiertage halten, nicht um der verstaendigen und Gelehrten willen, denn diese duerfens nirgend zu, sondern erstlich auch um leiblicher Ursache und Notdurft willen, welche die Natur lehret und fordert fuer den gemeinen Haufen, Knechte, Maegde, so die ganze Woche ihrer Arbeit und Gewerbe gewartet, dass sie sich auch einen Tag entziehen, zu ruhen und erquicken. Darnach ALLERMEIST darum, dass man an solchem Ruhetag (weil sonst nicht dazu kommen kann) Raum und Zeit nehme, Gottesdienste zu warten, also dass man zu Haufe komme, Gottes Wort zu hoeren und handeln, darnach Gott loben, <sup>und</sup> und beten."

The first point mentioned here by Luther, namely, <sup>that</sup> that nature requires rest for the workers after days of strenuous labor, is the one which gives the right to the government to legislate law regarding such rest. But of very much greater importance is the second point, which he mentions, namely, <sup>that</sup> that the congregation might know on which day it is to come together <sup>the</sup> for worship. In Hebr. 10, 25 we read: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Here we are told that it is the will of God



that Christians come together. Yet God has not, as he did in the Old Testament, designated such a day, on which they would assemble for worship. To this we bind ourselves, not as though it were a matter of conscience, but because the law of order demands it, I Cor. 14, 40.

And the fact, that the early Christians chose to observe the Sunday is very significant. Thereby they commemorated the glorious resurrection of their Lord and Savior. A more suitable day to remind them constantly of the resurrection of their Lord could not have been chosen. Furthermore, on this day the Holy Spirit was poured out over the Apostles. Truly ample reason to choose just this day.

Yet this choice was prompted by another motive. The early Christians wanted to maintain their Liberty which Christ had earned for them, and this gave them a splendid opportunity to do so when the time for it was ripe. Now, they might have chosen the Sabbath, and that for the sake of the Jews, but why did they not do this? For the same reason that Paul refused to circumcise Titus, namely, to put an end to the continual prating of the Jews, who having been obliged in one point, would have relentlessly insisted upon the observance of the Sabbath in view of the O.T. institution. That in the first days of Christianity the congregations came together on the Sabbath was solely done for the sake of the Jews, that the Apostles might gain a hearing before them, win them for Christ, and then educate them also regarding this matter. But the more the Jews opposed the Gospel, and insisted upon the observance of the Sabbath, the more the Church was forced to take steps against them, until finally, it broke with Judaism entirely and severed its connection with the Synagogue by appointing the first day of the week for their congregational worship. Thus the Christ-



ians chose the Sunday in view of neither the command of the Apostles, nor of any Scripture passage, but solely of their <sup>own</sup> free will in accordance with their true liberty in Christ.

Any other view of the Sunday question brings us face <sup>to</sup> face with dire consequence. All that maintain, that the <sup>Sabbath</sup> Sabbath is still to be celebrated in the New Testament, or, even <sup>grant-</sup> granting that the O.T. Sabbath was abrogated, nevertheless contend, that the Sunday was instituted by God in the place of the O.T. Sabbath, in reality militate against a number of doctrines, <sup>above</sup> above all against the doctrine of justification by Faith alone, <sup>and</sup> and of Christian Liberty. "Fidelibus."

We have seen before, that no special days are commanded to be observed in the New Testament. He, then, who seeks to bind the conscience of the Christians to the observance of certain days as commanded of God, wants to bring them under <sup>the</sup> the yoke of the O.T. and robs them of their Christian Liberty. According to the Gospel the Christian is free from the law, insofar, that he is not justified through it. If on the <sup>other</sup> other hand the Christian were obliged to keep Sunday as a divine institution, then indeed, he would still be under the law; in this case the Sunday law; it would not be sufficient for him to live in faith; he would be compelled for conscience sake <sup>to</sup> to reckon with certain appointed days. If that is the case, he no longer is justified by faith alone. <sup>no</sup> Of this the Augsburg Con-  
fession says: "These errors (God instituted the Sunday) crept into the Church when this righteousness of faith was not <sup>taught</sup> taught clearly enough.....which opinion must needs remain where the righteousness of faith and Christian liberty are not known." Art. 28. <sup>for the Christian there is but one law, the law of love</sup>

Moreover, such doctrines deny the completeness of Christ's atonement. If there are such laws, which even the



regenerate must keep in the N.T. then he is no longer justified <sup>not</sup> by faith alone, but by works, and thus overthrows Christ's own words: "It is finished."

Finally it brings about false doctrines concerning the office of Christ. It represents him as a new Lawgiver <sup>not</sup> contrary to his own statement, that he came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill it. Christ was no new Lawgiver. <sup>Moses' Law</sup> Moses' Law was complete. Baier says: "Lex moralis mosaica, seu decalogus eadem est cum lege Christi; illam enim quidem a pharasaicis corruptelis purgavit, et rectius declaravit, NON autem praecepta moralia plane nova dedit fidelibus." <sup>the Reformed sects are</sup>

And what is the relation of the Sunday to the Sabbath? According to the Scriptures there is no relation whatsoever between the two, since the former is a product of Christian liberty and the latter is the express command of God in the O.T. And yet our opponents insist upon the observance of Sunday <sup>as</sup> as instituted by God. Summing up we would put the following questions to them: If Christ or the Apostles have really <sup>trans-</sup>ferred the Sabbath from the last day of the week to the <sup>first,</sup> first, how do we explain the fact, that neither the Scriptures nor the Church of the first three centuries know anything about this? How do we explain that fact, that the first Christians did <sup>not</sup> not observe Sunday exclusively, but for a long time celebrated Sunday and the Sabbath side by side? How do we explain the fact, <sup>that</sup> that the oldest teachers of the Church never seek to base Sunday <sup>ob-</sup>observance on Scriptural grounds?

Certainly we are walking on firm ground when we maintain <sup>-tain</sup> that Sunday is not a scriptural, but merely a Church institution. <sup>-tion</sup> Indeed, for the Christian there is but one law, the law of love; and who, therefore, cannot prove that Sunday observance flows from love to God and to our neighbor, must of necessity cease



from his contentions. And looking for such proof in the N.T. they will look in vain, for in the whole N.T. there is not a trace of such a commandment. There all days are equal; <sup>on</sup> none of them are we forbidden to work, not even on Sunday. And the Scripture is not only silent as regards the institution of Sunday, but very emphatically states, that we are not to bind our conscience with the observance of any special day. Col. 2, <sup>16,</sup> 16. 17 and Rom. 14, 5.

Thus we have seen that neither the claims of the <sup>-th</sup> Seventh Day Adventist, who would have us celebrate the Saturday as the O.T. Sabbath, nor the contentions of the Reformed sects are founded on a firm scriptural foundation, and so we are not <sup>com-</sup> <sup>regard-</sup> compelled to deviate in any way from our present principles regarding the doctrine of the Sabbath and Sunday.